(c) and (d) C-DOT has been periodically reviewing the compensation package for the staff. Some benefits to the staff within the existing guidelines are also under consideration of the Government.

Non-Payment of special pay to Assistant Engineers posted in U.P Circle

860. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that all the assistant engineers posted in the office of the Chief General Manager Telecommunications, U.P. Circle are not getting special pay while their counterparts in Punjab and Haryana Circle are getting it ; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for this discrepancy ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) and (b) All the Assistant Engineers in the office of Chief General Manager, U.P. and Punjab Telecom Circles are not getting special pay while the Assistant Engineers who are designated as Assistant Directors and post in the office of Chief General Manager Haryana Telecom. Circle are getting special pay.

Supply of switching equipment to DOT

861. SHRI S. MADHAVAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is true that the Department of Telecommunications has accepted the offer of some foreign companies to lower their prices in the supply of switching equipments though they quoted higher prices, in their tenders;

(b) what are the reasons for rejecting lowest quotation and the highest bidders were called for negotiations; and

(c) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the Hindu dated the 3rd April, 1993 on this matter.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Telephone Connections in Andhra Pradesh

862. DR. NARREDDY THULASIREDDY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of people in Andhra Pradesh who are in the waiting list for new telephone connections ; and

(b) by which this waiting list is likely to be cleared.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) The waiting list as on 31st March, 1993 is 1,69,208.

(b) Telephone to the waiting applicants are proposed to be provided progressively during the 8th Plan (92—97) which envisages :

— Provision of Telephones practically on demand in Tribal and Rural areas.

— Waiting period of Telephone connection not to exceed two years for large Telephone Systems.

Expansion plan are being drawn accordingly.

डाकघरों में विभागीय टिकट विक्रेताओं को प्रोत्साहन

863. श्री कामेश्वर पासवान:—क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या डाकघरों के काउंटरों से डाक-टिकटों और डाक संबंधी लेखन सामग्री की बिक्री के लिए